United Nations A/53/668

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 November 1998

Original: English

Fifty-third session
Agenda item 164
Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Letter dated 6 November 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of Austria and South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the European Union and the Southern African Development Community, we have the honour to draw your attention to the joint communiqué on the Ministerial Conference of the European Union and the Southern African Development Community, held at Vienna on 3 and 4 November 1998 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 164.

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Annex

Joint communiqué on the Ministerial Conference of the European Union and the Southern African Development Community, held at Vienna on 3 and 4 November 1998

1. The Third EU/SADC Ministerial Conference took place in Vienna, Austria from 3rd to 4th November 1998. The Conference was attended by Ministers from the Member States of the EU and SADC, EU Commissioner Prof. Pinheiro, and the SADC Executive Secretary Dr. Mbuende (see Annex 1 for the list of participants). The Conference was co-chaired by Dr. Wolfgang Schüssel, President of the Council of the European Union and Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, and Honourable Alfred Nzo, Chairman of the SADC Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister of South Africa. The Conference was also attended by the European Investment Bank and the ACP Secretariat as Observers.

2. The Conference was officially opened by Dr. Wolfgang Schüssel, President of the Council of the European Union, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria. In his statement, Dr. Schüssel underlined that the EU and SADC were two regional groups which had agreed to collaborate on the basis of mutual benefit. The basis of this partnership was democracy, human rights, good governance and sound economic policies. A major goal of the EU was to support SADC in the adaptation of their economic structures towards globalization. In his opening statement, the SADC Co-Chairperson and the Chairman of the SADC Council of Ministers indicated that although the SADC region faced serious challenges, it remained relatively stable. He stated that this well conceived forum should be utilized to make a difference to the lives of people. Statements were also made by the EU Commissioner and the Executive Secretary of SADC. The speakers summarised the developments and achievements since the last SADC/EU Ministerial Conference held in Windhoek from 14th to 15th October 1996, which had built on the foundation laid by the Berlin Declaration including political dialogue and trade and investment between the two regions.

3. The two sides reaffirmed the importance they attach to respect for human rights and the principles of democracy and recalled their commitment to build, consolidate and strengthen democratic institutions founded on accountability, transparency, good governance, and the rule of law. These fundamental principles form an essential element of, and the basis for co-operation between EU and SADC.

3.1 The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to development and indicated their intention to closely coordinate the planning and implementation of regional development programmes and projects in the fields such as transport and communications, energy, trade promotion, livestock protection, poverty alleviation, population and social development, food security, education, training and health.

4. Both sides agreed on the importance of consolidating the work already undertaken in this dialogue, and to further strengthen relations between the two regions. In this context, they also agreed to consider new themes and activities for future cooperation, as appropriate.
5. Both sides undertook to create conditions which would encourage the private sector to become more involved in contributing to the expansion and enhancement of relations

between the two regions. They urged the private sector in the two regions to respond positively to these initiatives.

6. **Overall review of progress since the 1996 Windhoek Conference**
The Conference reviewed developments and welcomed the progress made, since the Windhoek Conference of October 1996, in the following areas:

6.1 **Political Dialogue**

6.1.1 The Conference reviewed progress and developments in the SADC and EU regions as well as in other parts of the world since the 1996 Windhoek Conference. The Conference noted that most SADC Member States had continued to enjoy relative peace and stability since the last Conference held in Windhoek, Republic of Namibia, in October 1996. This had been made possible by their observance of democratic principles, political tolerance and accommodation of opposing views, transparency and respect for the rule of law.

6.1.1.1 The Conference noted with grave concern that following the recent general elections in Lesotho, civil disturbances had resulted in loss of human life and widespread material destruction. It noted with appreciation that the parties to the conflict in Lesotho had accepted a SADC-brokered solution to hold new general elections in 15-18 months time. The Conference urged all parties to continue working on the root causes of the problem in order to prevent a repetition of the events. The Conference called upon all parties to continue on the road to a negotiated settlement and an electoral process which will lay the foundation for political stability and economic reconstruction. It pledged its support to both these processes and called upon the international community to do likewise.

6.1.1.2 The Conference noted with grave concern the deterioration of the politico-military situation in Angola, including remining activities, and agreed that the blame for the current impasse rests with Savimbi due to his continuing failure to comply with his obligations under the Lusaka Protocol and relevant Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. It demanded that Savimbi complies immediately and without conditions with his obligations, in particular the complete demilitarisation of his forces and full cooperation in the immediate and unconditional extension of State administration throughout the national territory.
The Conference stressed the absolute necessity for the full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions, including sanctions as contained in Resolutions 954, 1127, 1137, 1173, 1189 and 1202. The Conference welcomed the decision of SADC to ensure flight regulation and improved control of airports and airspace with a view to monitoring the situation in Angola and urged other States to act accordingly.
The Conference welcomed the decision of the Angolan Government to pursue dialogue with UNITA Renovada in order to foster peace and reconstruction of Angola and encouraged the Government to remain open to dialogue with others who can contribute positively to the peace process and national reconciliation in Angola.
The Conference expressed strong support for the work of the United Nations Secretary General and his Special Representative, Mr. Issa Diallo, in furtherance of the peace process in the framework of the Lusaka Protocol and the above mentioned Security Council Resolutions.
The Conference noted the decisions on Angola taken by the SADC Summit at Grand Baie, Mauritius, in September 1998.

6.1.1.3 The Conference expressed great regret at the outbreak of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a result of attempts by rebels and their allies to forcefully remove the Government of President Kabila from power. It underlined the need to support the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It also underlined the need to address the security concerns of all countries in the region.
The Conference expressed its hope that a peaceful solution to the conflict will be found rapidly. It wholeheartedly endorsed the efforts by African leaders and regional organisations to this end. A negotiated settlement should include an immediate cease-fire as well as an orderly withdrawal of foreign troops from the DRC.
The Conference called on all political actors in the DRC to commit themselves to orderly and peaceful transition to multi-party democracy, primarily through constructive dialogue and negotiations which should include the civil society as well as the media with the aim of furthering national reconciliation. The Conference appealed to the Government of Rwanda to acknowledge its military presence in the DRC to facilitate the signing and implementation of a cease-fire.

6.1.1.4 The Conference noted with grave concern that the Great Lakes Region continues to pose serious security situation and refugees problems to the regions of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa, and expressed concern over reports of inter-ethnic violence, human rights violations and continued humanitarian problems in the region. The Conference appealed to the international community to provide the necessary diplomatic and logistical support to the efforts by regional leaders to continue a genuine process of negotiations on the Great Lakes Region leading to a new political dispensation guaranteeing liberty, democracy and security for all their citizens. In this context, the Conference supported the idea of an international conference on Security and Co-operation in the Region, to be held in the longer term under the auspices of the United Nations and the OAU.
The Conference welcomed the commitment of the parties to the conflict in Burundi to engage in serious negotiations with the aim of resolving the conflict. It called on all parties to this conflict to put an end to all forms of violence and to continue their negotiations until a peaceful resolution of the conflict is found.

6.1.1.5 The Conference condemned terrorist attacks in Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa and other countries. They welcomed the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1189/1998 on 13 August 1998 which strongly condemned the terrorist bomb attacks in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania on 7 August 1998 that claimed hundreds of innocent lives, injured thousands of people and caused massive destruction to property.

6.1.1.6 The Conference remained concerned at the situation in Kosovo, in particular regarding the plight of refugees and displaced persons. Following agreements signed in Belgrade on 16 October 1998 between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and on 15 October 1998 between the FRY and NATO, the Conference noted that the FRY has made efforts towards compliance with UNSC Resolution 1199 and UNSC Resolution 1203. The Conference called on all actors in Kosovo to live up to their obligations and commitments, to refrain from further acts of violence and to engage in immediate political negotiations. It noted that the EU had pledged significant resources, both in personnel to the OSCE and in assistance for the return of refugees, and was prepared to continue doing so.

6.1.2 Regarding the membership of SADC, the Conference noted that the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Seychelles had acceded to the Treaty establishing SADC and become full members.

6.1.3 Regarding EU enlargement, the European side briefed the Conference on the latest developments in the enlargement process, i.e. the beginning of detailed accession negotiations on 10 November with Hungary, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Estonia and Cyprus. In this respect the EU underlined the importance of the implementation of the so-called pre-accession-strategy, preparing the candidate countries for accession, and the reports stating the progress of the candidate countries achieved so far. The EU underlined the importance of the internal reforms for the enlargement process and the future development of the EU. The EU outlined the process of current internal discussions about the Agenda 2000, the Strategy paper of the European Commission, especially in the fields of the future financial framework 2000-2006, the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, the structural and cohesion funds and the financial instruments for the enlargement process.

6.1.4 The Conference noted that the European Monetary Union would lead to a significant change in the international monetary regime. The Euro would play an increasingly important role as an international transaction, reserve and portfolio currency, thus transforming the European Union's role and status in the world market. Equally, a stable Euro would contribute to more stability in the international monetary system which would be in the interest of SADC, as the EU is one of SADC's major trading partners.

6.1.5 The Conference welcomed the measures taken to promote democracy and good governance and noted the outcome of all initiatives in this area. Special attention was paid to the EU-SADC Conference of Parliamentarians and NGOs in Vienna in October 1998 which was aimed at strengthening the political dialogue between parliamentarians and the civil society against the background of a changing global political and economic environment. The Conference took note of the call on EU governments to put the relations with Africa high on their foreign affairs agenda. It acknowledged that the joint conference of MPs, NGOs and civil society was successful in providing an institutional platform for a political debate and agreed on the need for further activities of this kind.

6.1.6 The Conference welcomed efforts to develop African initiatives and capabilities in the fields of conflict prevention and peace-keeping both within the OAU and sub-regional groupings. The EU is prepared to support these efforts. In this context the Conference welcomed the peace-keeping exercises "Blue Hungwe", which took place in April 1997, and the forthcoming "Blue Crane" as prime examples of capacity building for peace support operations.

6.1.7 The Conference noted with satisfaction the results of the ISS/Saferworld seminar on small arms trafficking held in South Africa in May 1998, and of the preventive diplomacy and peace-building seminar held in Kadoma, Zimbabwe, in August 1998. It endorsed their conclusions and the proposed follow up action.

6.1.8 The Conference exchanged views and welcomed the EU proposal to hold an EU-Africa Summit in the year 2000 aimed at fostering a more effective and integrated relationship between the European Union and the African continent.

6.2 Regional integration

6.2.1 The Conference expressed its appreciation for the progress SADC has continued to make on regional integration and the EU reaffirmed its commitment to continue supporting SADC in its integration process. This would be greatly enhanced by the recent entry into force of the 8th European Development Fund, under which the European Commission was making available to SADC an indicative envelope of 121 MECU for a programme of regional financial and technical cooperation. This was in addition to other financing from which the countries of Southern Africa could benefit under other European Community financial assistance programmes.

6.2.2 The Conference noted that the Trade Protocol had been ratified by four SADC Member States and that substantial progress was being made in the ratification process in other Member States. In this context, the Conference stressed the particular importance that the implementation of a free trade area within SADC will have on the economies of all member countries and on the region as a whole in particular as regards accelerated growth and sustainable development.

6.2.3 The Conference welcomed the decision of the SADC Summit at its meeting in Mauritius to enhance the role of SADC institutions in policy formulation, coordination and harmonisation, the greater involvement of the private sector and other stakeholders. It further noted the decision to continue with the system of sectoral coordination by Member States and the rationalisation of sectors, where appropriate, as well as rationalisation of the existing SADC project portfolio, using agreed project identification and appraisal criteria.

6.2.4 The Conference noted with appreciation that of the nine (9) signed protocols, four protocols on Immunities and Privileges; Transport, Communications and Meteorology; Energy; and Shared Watercourse Systems had received the required number of ratifications and had entered into force.

6.2.5 The Conference welcomed the signing of the Protocol on Tourism, which aimed at, among other things, ensuring balanced and complementary development of the Tourism Industry in the SADC region through collective efforts. The Conference also welcomed the signing of the Addendum to the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development: Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children.

6.2.6 The Conference recognised that further work was needed on the ratification of those protocols which have not yet entered into force.

6.2.7 The Conference noted with satisfaction that work was underway to finalise Protocols on:

(a) The SADC Tribunal
(b) Finance and Investment
(c) Industrial Development
(d) Culture and Information
(e) Health
(f) Wildlife

6.2.8 The Conference noted that a seminar on trade liberalisation had taken place in Dar Es Salaam in May 1998. The objective of the seminar was to encourage dialogue and free

exchange of ideas between the EU and SADC on the practicalities of meeting trade liberalisation aspirations. The Conference underlined the particular usefulness of this seminar, which focused on the practical problems of implementation. It welcomed the specific recommendations made at the seminar, encouraged private sector participation in the trade liberalisation process and agreed on the need for further activities of this kind.

6.2.9 The Conference took note of the Resolutions of the SADC-EU Conference on Transport held at Ministerial Level on 15-17 October 1998 in Maputo, Mozambique. It endorsed the holding of an Investors and Donors Conference at an appropriate date in 1999 and welcomed especially the intention of establishing the right environment to attract the private sector to participate.
The Conference recalled the importance of implementing the SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology as an essential element of strengthening and deepening the process of regional integration in the SADC region. It therefore invited all the participants of the Maputo conference to carry on their efforts and acknowledged the resolve of SADC Member States to implement the Protocol.
It stressed the importance of support by the international community for building up a regional transport network to enable SADC countries to achieve a fully integrated economic development.

6.3 **Cooperation in other fields**
The two sides welcomed that, since the Windhoek Conference, the EU and SADC had worked together in other areas of mutual interest, notably the following:

6.3.1 Combatting Illicit Drug Trafficking
A SADC-EU Drug Control Conference was held in Gaborone in February 1998. This indicated a broad recognition of the seriousness of the issue and a real need to address both supply and demand reduction, in the wider context of sound social and economic development.
The Conference noted that SADC Member States were committed to completing expeditiously the ratification of the SADC Protocol on Combatting Illicit Drug Trafficking. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to support the implementation of the SADC Regional Drugs Control Programme.

6.3.2 Landmines
The Conference highlighted the growing awareness of the tragic impact of landmines on the populations in many regions of the world struggling to recover from the effects of armed conflict.
The Conference enthusiastically welcomed the fact that the Ottawa Convention banning the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and their Destruction will enter into force following the 40th ratification coming from the OAU Chairmanship, Burkina Faso.
The Conference welcomed the follow-up to the landmines clearance issue since the previous SADC-EU Windhoek Conference, including mine awareness campaigns and other international responses. It noted that an EU-funded SADC landmines initiative, coordinated by the SADC Committee of Experts on Demining, was currently under implementation, focusing inter alia on the use of regional technology. The EU accepted the SADC invitation to visit Southern Africa to witness progress being made in landmine clearance operations.
The Conference further noted that since 1995 some ECU 25 million has been allocated by the European Union, in addition to the contributions of its Member States, for landmine

clearance actions within countries of the SADC region. The Conference appealed to the international community to join in this initiative and in this regard welcomed contributions from other countries and organisations.

6.3.3 Combatting HIV/AIDS

The Conference noted that the HIV/AIDS pandemic was having an enormous socio-economic impact on the SADC region. The Conference expressed an urgent need for SADC and its Member States to review and revamp their strategies and programmes for fighting HIV/AIDS to ensure that socio-economic gains made over the years are not drastically reversed, especially in areas like lower infant mortality, increased literacy, life expectancy, and skills acquisition. The Conference commended measures being undertaken by SADC Member States to confront the pandemic. The Conference agreed to intensify EU-SADC co-operation in this very important matter.

6.3.4 Integration of Demobilised Soldiers in Society

The two sides recognised the complexity of this issue and that an adequate response to the problem would require the successful implementation of other relevant programmes, including trade and investment, good governance, and social/economic issues, as well as appropriate resources. The Conference welcomed SADC's decision to assign the management and coordination of the activity related to demobilised soldiers to the Committee of Experts on Demining.

6.3.5 Management of Shared River Basins

The Conference welcomed the ratification of the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems. The Conference noted that the recommendations and conclusions of the Maseru Conference on the Management of Shared River Basins would enhance the implementation of the Protocol. The Conference further noted that a SADC/UNDP Roundtable Conference on water will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 11th to 12th December 1998. The objective of the Conference will be to provide a systematic and structured forum for discussion and resource mobilisation between SADC and its development partners. The Conference urged the international community to participate in the Roundtable Conference.

6.4 **Other issues**

6.4.1 SADC External Debt Problem

The Conference, while acknowledging that negotiations on debt issues can only take place in the appropriate fora, expressed concern over the negative impact of debt on the economic, social and political life of SADC countries. The Conference noted the view of SADC that their debt servicing obligations are often done at the expense of investment in the social sectors of health and education and that they have the potential to distort national priorities and to deprive countries of resources for investment and stimulation of economic growth.
The Conference welcomed the HIPC Initiative and noted that one SADC country, Mozambique, qualifies for debt relief thereunder. The Conference noted SADC's intention to work for a review of the qualification criteria in order to get more countries to benefit from the Initiative.

6.4.2 Perspectives Post-Lomé

The Conference had a useful exchange of views on the future partnership to be negotiated between the EU and the ACP countries. The EU underlined the central role to be given to the elimination of poverty and the promotion of a stable and democratic political environment under a new agreement. While acknowledging that negotiations for the successor agreement to the present Lomé Convention have to be undertaken in the framework of EU-ACP Co-operation, the Conference agreed to continue to exchange views on this issue within the framework of the Berlin Initiative.

6.4.3 Strengthening the rights of the child
Particular concern was raised regarding child labour, sexual exploitation, children in armed conflicts, child soldiers, children with disabilities, children in institutions as well as children in relation to HIV/AIDS. The Conference agreed that strengthening the rights of the child must be the key to the solution.

7. **Future priorities**
The Conference agreed on the following future priorities:
- strengthening democracy, including support for the electoral process in the SADC region
- enhanced cooperation for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in particular through networking of partner institutions in the political and security fields, the exchange of experts, and the establishment of consultation mechanisms for crisis prevention, resolution and management
- intensification of measures to combat HIV/AIDS
- intensify the common fight against organised crime especially through
= training measures aimed at combatting crime
= tackling illicit drug trafficking
= measures against illicit trafficking in small arms
= preventing money-laundering
- strengthening the rights of the child
- clearance of landmines and mine awareness campaigns
- promoting regional integration in particular through support to the trade and transport sectors, among others through:
= technical assistance to address issues relating to the SADC Free Trade Area
= regional cooperation in air traffic security in Southern Africa,
= promotion of trade and private investment
= support for development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- water and energy resources management

8. The Conference agreed to hold its next Ministerial meeting in the SADC region on a date to be mutually agreed.

9. Finally, the Conference expressed its appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Austria for the hospitality extended to the delegates and for the excellent arrangements and facilities provided for the Conference.